

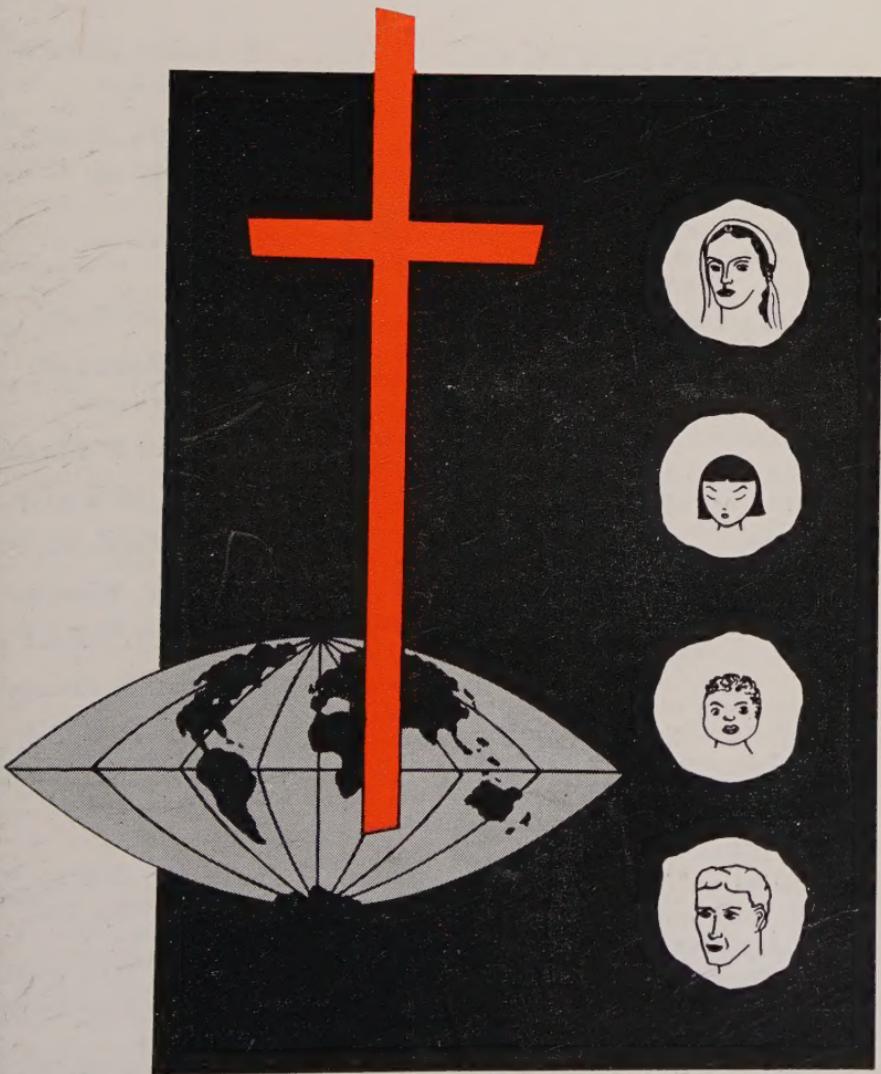
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JUNE 1957

Social Action

A Magazine of Christian Concern



SOCIAL ACTION in the UNITED CHURCH

Social Action

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The Reviving Christian Social Hope

An Editorial

The full meaning of the denominational merger that is about to be consummated must be sought not only in the mood and intention of the merging bodies but in what is stirring in the social and cultural environment. And as we see it, there is plenty stirring. Changing moods and outlooks on the world are hard to sense by those who are living in the midst of them. It is when they have become a part of history that they are readily discernible. Nevertheless, we venture to suggest that when the history of our times in America is recorded two trends will be observed which are of the utmost importance to the Christian Church.

One of these trends has to do with the understanding of the Christian faith; the other, with the nature of the social and political order and the conditions of social progress. Brought into one perspective they will be seen to be complementary.

For many years the Christian social witness has been somewhat muted in our Protestant churches. The "social gospel" has been on the defensive against theological attack. This has been due, it is probably safe to say, to a complex of factors. Some of the Christian social prophets of yesteryear were without question a bit intoxicated with per-

fectionist visions. Moreover, socially prophetic religion thrives best, not in the midst of prosperity, but in times of suffering and discontent on the part of large numbers of people who feel that they are victims of social injustice. Yet it seems probable that what has been referred to as the "eclipse of the social gospel" was due, in its theological aspect, chiefly to the cold chill that has afflicted the Western world as a result of the terrible bloodletting that began in 1914 and has been with us either as actuality or as a nightmarish threat ever since. Hope for a redeemed world inevitably weakens in the face of a frightening demonstration of how evil men can be.

A melancholy aspect of this clouding of hopes for a Christian society is the confluence of theological disillusionment with the secular hostility to those ideals which the social gospel had fostered. Theologians who have been impelled to repudiate what they regarded as a superficial and harmful optimism in liberal social Christianity have sometimes acquired as bedfellows social reactionaries from whose proximity they derived no joy.

But today there seems to be in American Protestantism a revival of Christian social hope—a recovery, so

to speak, of belief in grace, not merely as *mercy* but as spiritual *power*, of confidence in the potentialities of human nature captured by divine love. Indeed, one might say that what really has been in eclipse in our generation is the necessity, because of man's inclination to sinful injustice, of continually readjusting the social institutions through which he acts in order to give them more of a redemptive and less of an exploitive character. This ethical necessity is a major insight of prophetic Christianity.

It is noteworthy indeed that the American theologian who has done more than anyone else to provoke a critical re-examination of the social gospel movement has himself pointed out the danger of moral pessimism in a realistic theology. Many years ago Reinhold Niebuhr wrote (in *Human Destiny*):

The theologies which have sought to do justice to the fact that saints nevertheless remain sinners have frequently, perhaps usually, obscured the indeterminate possibilities of realizations of good in both individual and collective life.

We are here suggesting that there is now emerging among us a disciplined but rugged Christian social hope.

The second of the two trends referred to is the development of a positive political philosophy—an affirmative conception of the state in place of the political negativism that has been fostered by the menace of totalitarianism. It has become a habit among many Americans—not a few of them churchmen, both lay and ministerial—to discount and discredit government as a corrupting

force. A great heresy of recent years has been the equating of government to tyranny, and of its welfare functions to political regimentation.

Here again the fault has been the magnifying of one aspect of the human situation to the extent of eclipsing another. Because power "tends to corrupt" we have been confronted with a veritable crusade against "big government" astonishingly similar to the philosophical anarchism of earlier years and even bearing resemblance to the communist doctrine that the state must "wither away."

And again it is here suggested that Americans are emerging from this ill-conceived political negativism and turning again to a positive and constructive view of the state. Without abating in the slightest degree our jealous concern for civil liberties and our rejection of the omnicompetent state, we are beginning to see more clearly the possibilities of genuine progress through the instrumentality of a government that is benevolent as well as just, disciplined as well as powerful. Indeed it may well be that to learn the constructive, democratic use of government for the promotion of both well-being and freedom is the major assignment of American citizens in the years ahead.

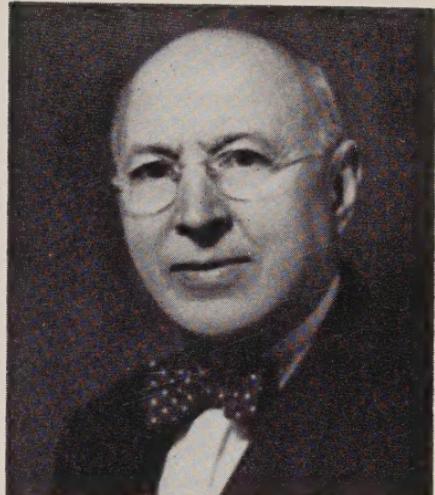
With these comments the Editor brings to a close his four years of work on **SOCIAL ACTION**—years that have brought many satisfactions and delightful relationships for which he will always be deeply grateful.

AN APPRECIATION

of

DR. JOHNSON

With the June issue of *SOCIAL ACTION*, Dr. F. Ernest Johnson completes four full years as Editor. In many ways it can be said that he launched a "new" magazine. It was new in format and appearance. It was new in content, with editorials added, a *WORKSHOP* section, and occasional book reviews. Above all, it was new in editorial policy, presenting varying opinions on the controversial subjects with which it dealt. And with all the newness, Dr. Johnson not only maintained, but lifted, the magazine's standards of quality, and procured for it articles of excellence. There has been no dulling of points or curling of the sharp edge of incisive thought and prophetic criticism. *SOCIAL ACTION* has had important things to say to church leaders in these troublous years, and it has said them with conviction and power. These four volumes will be one more of the many testaments to his leadership in the field of the Church's research and publication. They will mark a



high level of attainment in the history of the Council for Social Action.

It is with warm and genuine appreciation to Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, Editor of *SOCIAL ACTION*, 1953-1957, that the Council for Social Action, seconded by the Commission on Christian Social Action, expresses thanks for services rendered and work well done. The two agencies trust that he has found reward in the satisfaction of having done an outstanding job for thousands of readers. Through them he has served well the churches and members of our Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed fellowships, and, beyond them, many among other communions.

THE COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL ACTION
of the Congregational
Christian Churches

THE COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN
SOCIAL ACTION
of the Evangelical and
Reformed Church

Two Streams – One River

By

Ray Gibbons and Huber F. Klemme

TWENTY-THREE YEARS before the formation of the General Synod of the United Church in Cleveland, Ohio, in June, 1957, two historic events took place at the same time and nearly in the same place. On June 25, 1934, the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches launched the Council for Social Action at Oberlin, Ohio. On June 26, 1934, the Evangelical and the Reformed Churches united at Cleveland, Ohio, and soon merged their social action bodies into the Commission on Christian Social Action. Now these two social action bodies unite under the General Synod of the United Church of Christ to form a new Council for Christian Social Action. The CCSA takes "Council" from the name of the Council for Social Action and the word "Christian" from the Commission on Christian Social Action. Will more significant changes result from this union? Let us trace the rise of these two streams, sound the depth and determine the rate of flow in the new river to be formed by this union.

The Bible Is the Source

Both social action agencies trace their origin and their authority to the Bible, especially to the prophetic

tradition of the Old Testament and to the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles of the New Testament. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was addressed to the whole person in all of his social relationships; he was concerned with both the spiritual and material well-being of man. Law and social custom were transformed in the light of his new perspectives. He did not hesitate to engage in controversy with the established order. He claimed God's sovereignty over every human concern, including business and political life. He limited his work to no one people or nation but ministered to all sorts and conditions of men. By his incarnation, his demonstration of God's love for man even to death on the Cross, and by his resurrection he brought life and faith and hope to mankind. Social action begins with his prayer, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The Social Gospel

The rediscovery of the whole Gospel for the whole of man in his individual and social relations was one of the results of what has been called the Social Gospel movement. It opposed the limitations put upon American Protestantism by the ex-

traordinary individualism of the nineteenth century. That the Christian faith was confined to individual salvation, thrift, piety, and abstinence from drink, dancing and card-playing, was stoutly challenged as contrary to the teaching of the Bible and inadequate to the demands of the day. In his address to the Council of Congregational Churches in 1907, Dr. Washington Gladden decried what he called "unbridled individualism." "Such was the challenge of Jesus Christ to the social order which he found existing, which was, in its fundamental principles, the same social order that exists today. . . . He condemned it as radically wrong; he called for its reconstruction upon a ruling idea which would change the direction of human conduct . . . the Church of Jesus Christ is called to replace this principle of selfishness and strife with the principle of good-will and service."

Walter Rauschenbusch in his *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, *Christianizing the Social Order*, and *Theology for the Social Gospel* extended the borders of the Gospel to their true dimensions. Countless other preachers and theologians pressed outward the restricting fences, so that the Gospel is no longer limited to the individual soul and its salvation.

Both denominations have felt the enlarging impact of the Social Gospel movement upon the Church's understanding of its task in society. It has been said that the Social Gospel movement was the effort of the Protestant churches in America to meet the challenges of the new in-

dustrialism of the late nineteenth century. The factory system, the growth of urbanism, the great immigrations, and the development of extremes of wealth and poverty created problems for the churches which did not exist in an agrarian economy. Many people denied that these new conditions were a proper concern of the churches. Others defended the establishment of social service agencies and the adaptations of church life to the new urban centers but opposed any criticism of the industrialism which produced the evils. But the Social Gospel movement insisted on turning the eyes of the churches to the forces which were producing these new obstacles to their work.

In 1908, the Methodist Episcopal Church led the way with a statement called "The Social Creed of the Churches." In 1912, the Federal Council of Churches adopted a similar statement. In 1913 the Congregationalists and the Evangelicals set up their first committees for social service; and in the following year the Reformed Church established a similar commission. These efforts were strengthened in the period of disillusionment following World War I, a war which was to have made the world safe for democracy but which brought instead the rise of communism and fascism.

Both denominations felt the powerful effects of the Great Depression which exposed the inadequacy of an economic order which conceived of itself as outside of the moral law and governed by the automatic operation of the law of supply and demand. Under the bludgeonings of

such circumstances, the churches again searched the Scriptures for the message which would be adequate for the troubled times. They found that "if Christianity stops with the individual, it stops." But the Bible did not stop there and neither must the Church of Jesus Christ. In 1934, the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches established the Council for Social Action that we might have "action to match our Gospel" in economic, racial, and international affairs; and the Evangelical and Reformed Church established the Commission on Christian Social Action "to make the implications of the Gospel effective in society."

Diversity of Gifts

There are certain distinctive contributions which each church will make to social action in the United Church because of its heritage. The "established" churches of colonial Massachusetts were formed by an act of the legislature and supported by taxation. They controlled elections, since only church members were allowed to vote. The churches took seriously their responsibility to the body politic. They gathered their members in a covenant relationship and furthered government by the consent of the governed in the political order. They maintained order in society but they also encouraged freedom. Leaders like John Wise of Ipswich, Massachusetts, aroused a flaming demand for liberty many years before the Revolutionary War. In the nineteenth century many Congregationalists became deeply embroiled in the anti-

slavery movement; and in 1846 they and others established the American Missionary Association which opposed slavery, established anti-slavery congregations, and engaged in extensive education for the Negroes freed by the Civil War.

The Evangelical and Reformed traditions were more closely associated with the immigrations of German-speaking people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They expressed their social concern through welfare programs, inspired by the social institutions of Germany, and helped to meet the need for the Americanization of more recent immigrants. Joseph Rieger of the Evangelical Church, a close associate of Elijah Lovejoy, the abolitionist, exemplified the early concern for social issues which later led to the formation of commissions with the purpose that "the full gospel be preached."

The Same Spirit

Both denominations express their Christian convictions concerning public decisions through their national assemblies and also through the statements and educational programs of their social action agencies. Such statements cover the same range of interests: social security, education, housing, labor and management, economic life, racial relations, community problems, citizenship and international affairs. They reflect a high measure of consensus in their approach to issues, in the analysis of problems, in their support of or opposition to proposed policies of government, and in the kinds of action which they recommend. A comparison of the most

recent resolutions of the General Council and the General Synod illustrates the close parallelism and the large areas of overlapping of interest. There is little difference of social viewpoint between the two agencies.

There is marked parallelism between their forms of organization. Both the CSA and the CCSA are directly responsible to the highest and most widely representative national body in the church. In both cases they are supported by a portion of the benevolence contributions of the churches. Both have boards, elected by the national Council or Synod, which are responsible for the direction of policies and for making periodic reports to the national bodies. Both agencies have designated committees for special areas of work such as international and racial relations. The CCSA also has a committee on Religion and Education; the CSA one on Christian Citizenship. The CCSA publishes a monthly newsletter, *CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY*, and the CSA a monthly magazine, *SOCIAL ACTION*.

Since the formation of the two social action agencies their policies, programs, and procedures have been very similar. Their patterns of organization are closely parallel. The CCSA has three full-time staff members while the CSA has four full-time persons and gives small grants to state conferences for part-time social action leadership. The parallelism in staff assignments is interesting. All members share in the responsibility for general social education in the churches. Each staff has an executive secretary and a

secretary for racial and cultural relations who is partially supported by the home mission boards. The CCSA has one person who gives full time to field work and the CSA one person for publications and leadership training. The fourth member of the CSA staff specializes in one of the areas of interest—international relations. The CCSA has given more attention to the problems of conscientious objection and to marriage and family life, while the CSA has done more in the areas of agricultural and industrial relations.

The Process of Uniting

Moves toward closer cooperation of the two social action bodies began with joint meetings in 1947. These meetings of members and staffs continued through 1948 and 1949 and resumed after the termination of the Cadman case in September, 1955. In the earlier years there was an agreed definition of the "Scope of Social Action." Plans were carefully laid for the integration of the work of the two agencies and a plan for unification was incorporated as Article VIII-F of the Basis of Union. The two agencies jointly published *CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY* until changes in *SOCIAL ACTION* led to the inclusion of a news and program section called *WORKSHOP*, which seemed more useful to the Council's program at the time. A number of programs and institutes were co-sponsored during those years.

In June and September, 1956, the General Council and the General Synod voted to maintain their present structures until the adoption of a Constitution for the United

Church. Since the CSA and the CCSA are related directly to these judicatories it is necessary for them to maintain their structures until the Constitution is adopted. It may look like unification by multiplication to unite two to make three organizations. Actually there will be much meshing which will further integration. The twelve present members of the CCSA have been nominated for membership in the new Council for Christian Social Action. Twelve of the eighteen members of the CSA have been nominated for the other twelve memberships in the new CCSA. It may look like a three-ring circus, but actually it will be under one tent—the social concern of the churches supported by their common Christian faith and stretching out to encompass all human needs. Such a period of intermingling may provide time for adjustment and experimentation which in the end will make the integration more complete and the union more genuine.

Plans for United Work

The formation of the Council for Christian Social Action in June, 1957, will quickly deepen the channels of cooperation already established. For example, the Editorial Board of *SOCIAL ACTION* will be reconstituted so that instead of seven Congregational Christians and one Evangelical and Reformed member there will be four of each. Instead of joint promotion of *SOCIAL ACTION* there will be joint production. *CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY* will become the program service of the new Council, replacing *WORKSHOP*. All

publications of the two agencies will be planned together and duplications will be eliminated. Similarly, the committees of international relations will be united. The summer social action institutes will become the training centers for synodical as well as state conference social action chairmen. In the summer of 1957 there will be three social action institutes instead of two:

WEST COAST: July 9-13. White Memorial Conference Center, Mill Valley, California.

MIDWEST: July 15-19. Lakeland College, Plymouth, Wisconsin.

EAST: July 23-27. Congregational Conference Center, Framingham, Massachusetts.

There has been joint promotion of the travel and study seminars to Europe and to Mexico in 1957, and in 1958 there will be a joint conference on the Christian as Citizen, co-sponsored with the laymen's fellowships of the two churches. Staff functions will be reassigned to remove unnecessary duplications and increase the range of services. Budgets will be merged as rapidly as the program needs and the constitutional processes will permit. For the present, the offices of the Commission at Cleveland and the Council in New York will be continued until some determination is made for offices for the United Church.

There are very real possibilities of broadening the services provided by the social action staff in the union. For example, it will be necessary for fewer members of the joint staff to attend the various meetings of the five departments of the Divi-

sion of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of Churches. Nor will it be necessary for each staff to maintain files and provide resources on all the social action topics. Provisional allocation of resource responsibility has been made among the staff members which will extend the range of subjects on which the combined staff can provide more information and better services. (See pages 26-27.)

Two Become One

Two streams rising in wide separation, moving parallel for a generation, drawing closely together for a decade, now flow into one channel. Will they only form a broader stream, or will they create deeper currents, extend the areas under cultivation, and sustain new life?

The greater racial diversity among Congregational Christian churches may speed action on racial integration; the difference in heritage and experience of the two denominations may correct and enlarge the social viewpoints and practices of

each. However, the differences are not so great as to lead us to expect that the united organization will strike off in entirely new directions. The similarity of their approach in the past and their common Christian basis for action assure that the two social action agencies merging into one will continue in the same general direction.

The really exciting possibilities do not arise from the emergence of a new and larger organization, but from the deepening of social conscience, the widening of Christian perspectives, and the acceptance of greater social tasks which may take place. The decade before us presents problems too great for all the resources of the United Church and their agencies of social education and action. This is the challenge which Christ presents to us through his Incarnation in human history. It is in order to meet the demands of the Gospel more faithfully that the Council and the Commission unite their resources, their hope and faith, and their wills.

It is as important that the Church should labor for the conversion of society as that it should labor for the conversion of individuals. It is evangelism to challenge evils in the social order. Evangelism is never merely piety; and, despite what is frequently said nowadays, it is never merely personal.

—W. G. BERRY

In God's Will for Our Times
(United Church of Canada)

For Such a Time as This

Prospectus for Social Action in The United Church of Christ

By

Ray Gibbons and Huber F. Klemme

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT STORY, when Mordecai called upon the young Queen Esther to intercede with the king in behalf of her people, she manifested understandable hesitation in the face of the risk involved. After all, she was a fragile element in the midst of a changing social situation; and there was no assurance that she could turn the uncertain course of events. Yet her kinsman put her responsibility squarely before her. She was not to think that she would escape the storm of destruction if it struck; and if deliverance came without her help, that very fact might destroy her. "Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

The God of history is placing before his Church a similar challenge in the precarious time in which we are living. Certainly no one who reads either his Bible or his newspaper with any seriousness can believe that the church exists as an ornament, to give some sanctity to the activities in which people would engage anyway, and to offer "peace of mind" when reality becomes too

stern. The "pilgrim people of God" have a mission to rebuke oppression, to reconcile separated brethren, and to build justice into the framework of our common life.

Social Responsibility of the United Church

Is it presumptuous to suggest that the United Church of Christ has a serious part to play in this mission? It is not an exclusive or even a leading role. No single communion is in a position to claim a superior or indispensable position in the scheme of things. But faith requires that we accept our responsibility. In forming a United Church, we bring together varying traditions and practices, but we are convinced that the things which unite us are more fundamental and more lasting than those which divide us. Are we uniting merely to have a larger fellowship, and a higher place in the statistical summaries of American church life? Or are we uniting in the hope that by God's grace we may be made a more effective instrument for the accomplishment of his will in the world? If we read aright the

minds of our leaders who, in the face of both honest questioning and rigorous opposition, agreed that this is "a unity which seeks us," what we desire is *not a bigger organization but a better witness*.

Whether or not we measure up to the divine call in "such a time as this" depends on a number of factors. It depends upon whether we have the basic commitment which is intrinsic to a healthy church, upon whether we have an understanding of the essential needs of our time, and whether we have the flexibility with which to meet them.

It is characteristic of both the Congregational Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed denominations that they have been able to relinquish traditional procedures, to see new deeds, and to welcome fresh ways of working. Perhaps one of the advantages of the uniting process is that it compels the re-thinking and reshaping of ecclesiastical structures and procedures.

WHAT OF OUR COMMITMENT?

Is our commitment vital? Is it biblically and theologically rooted? And is it socially relevant? Our heritage as Christians in the Reformation tradition involves a number of core convictions which have bearing here:

We are committed to the sovereignty of God over all of life. No area of man's life is out of bounds to God's judgment and grace. Societies no less than individuals are accountable to the Lord of history. Any religion that stays out of politics or economic life and has noth-

ing to say about race relations or social welfare is something other than the faith of the Old and New Testaments. Both groups which are joining in the United Church have asserted this truth again and again.

We share a concern for persons. The laws of Moses, the zeal of the prophets, the healing ministry of Christ, and the communal sharing in the Apostolic Church have led through the centuries to organized benevolence within the Christian fellowship. This heritage contributed greatly to the social conscience which today provides a multitude of social services through private groups and public agencies. It also moves Christians to use the channels of personal influence and group action where the well-being of persons is involved. There is a clear line that runs from the Good Samaritan to refugee legislation, and from the "cup of cold water" to school construction bills. And that line is concern for "even the least of these brethren."

We are persuaded that God's purpose for man is worked out in community. God does not create individuals in isolation. He creates persons-in-community. Social structures inevitably affect the well-being of persons. Social institutions and arrangements may, at many points, thwart the will of God, or further it. And in any case the church cannot ignore them or be indifferent to them. It must seek to serve and to redeem the communities in which men live.

We believe that God entered into human life in a unique way in Jesus Christ, and that his redemptive pow-

er is a resource for Christian action in society. Both the Incarnation and the Atonement are a "scandal" to those who like their religion pure and "spiritual" and private. However, God entered human life; took its burdens and sins upon himself; and paid the infinite price of breaking the barriers which alienate man from himself, from his God, and from his brother. This redemptive act sustains the struggle for fellowship and justice and challenges every arrangement that ignores or defies God's will.

We believe that God has called the church into being as an instrument of his purpose, and has sent forth his Spirit for our guidance in his service. The Church lives by God's grace and by its faithfulness to him. That faithfulness cannot be indifferent to the historic Revelation nor can it adhere to a dead tradition. The Pilgrims who held fast both to their reliance on the written Word and to their confidence that God had "more light" to break from that Word suggest an approach for our witness today.

On that foundation and in that spirit, let us look at some of the problems which will concern us in the next few years during which the United Church will begin to fulfill its mission in society.

CONCERN OF THE NEXT DECADE

In Family Life

While Christian faith is concerned with persons in all their relationships, the Church has deep interest in the sanctity and well-being of the family. Its function in the procrea-

tion, nurture, and fulfillment of persons is unique.

The stresses and strains of contemporary life have left their mark upon the modern family. In many respects technology has lightened the physical burden of living. But keeping up the payments on the labor-saving devices to say nothing of keeping up the devices themselves, has presented its own difficulty. "Keeping up with the Joneses," living in the right suburb, having the right kind of car—in some circles, enough cars—and participating in the round of socially required activities puts men, women, young people, and even children under terrific psychological pressure, even when they are in an economically favorable position. The pressure on the large number of persons in the lower income brackets is often almost unbearable.

Perhaps no institution has been more profoundly affected by the urbanization of America than the family. The city family of today is vastly different from the farm family of a generation ago. The rural home sheltered at least three generations: the parents, their unmarried children, and the grandparents; and the married children lived near enough to return with their children for holidays. The city family lives in a small apartment, the parents live elsewhere, and the children of working age live in other places. The economic solidarity of the large family, in which the young had a useful role and the elderly a secure livelihood, has been lost. Much of women's work is now done outside the home. One-third of all women

and one-fourth of all married women work for wages outside the home. Furthermore, the family plays a diminished role in education, in religious instruction, and in the transmission of cultural values. Under these new conditions of isolated family life, how can the needs of men be met for security and for fulfillment in primary human relationships? What programs of education, social security, housing, recreation, and church life will help restore the city man to his rightful mind?

There are special problems for low income families, many of whom have a large number of children. Families of minority racial groups enjoy little more than half as much income as do whites. Most elderly persons are forced to live on meager incomes. The children of broken homes often suffer from a very serious lack of income.

The mobility of the population has had a profound effect on family life: every year one out of five Americans changes his place of residence. Fewer families live in communities where they know and are known deeply and fully. Rootless families tend to conform to accepted opinions and attitudes in their new communities.

The Church has a tremendous responsibility to meet the needs of all members of the family—the young, the middle-aged, and the elderly. How will it give support and a genuine sense of community to uprooted, mobile, isolated city families living in an impersonal environment?

In Community Life

The churches share great responsibility for the life of the local com-

munity. Among the problems that call for our best efforts are:

Mental and physical health: Do we have adequate facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness? How can all persons enjoy the great benefits of medical progress? How can the costs be distributed more equitably?

Use of leisure: The coming thirty-five-hour week, which may be reduced still more, offers tremendous opportunities to the Church. How can these added hours bring enrichment and deeper meaning to life? In a society where much of one's dignity and worth have been related to his work, how can the leisure of retired persons become a source of value?

Juvenile delinquency: Only three per cent of our youth are delinquent, but this number is far too high. The Church has great resources for helping to eradicate the causes of delinquency and for communicating Christian conviction and purpose more effectively to youth.

Alcohol education: While church members disagree about the use of alcoholic beverages there is no disagreement about the need for better understanding of the effects of alcohol on personality, and for more constructive help for the four million persons who have become alcoholics. There is new hope for curing alcoholism, but it will require the combined efforts of the Church, scientific research, psychology, enlightened public opinion, state support for therapeutic institutions, and organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

Obviously, church and church

school face the necessity of carrying on more effective alcohol education than the traditional temperance lesson and cannot be content with the prevalent policy of laissez-faire. Such education must take into account the established facts about the effects of alcohol, the reasons which lead people to misuse it, the foundations for wise personal decisions, and a more adequate understanding of the stresses of our culture.

Housing for all people: It has been estimated that the United States needs to build two million homes per year, and that at least ten per cent of these should be for low-income families. Minority groups face a special barrier over and above the economic hurdle which is common to all. It consists of the various stratagems used to exclude them from the housing that is within reach of their pocketbooks. Indeed, the entire matter of urban redevelopment and community planning calls for more intensive work in the years ahead; for, like many desirable movements, it runs the risk of being neglected in favor of the short-term objectives of special interest groups.

Anxiety: The contemporary American tends to be "other-directed" and has a morbid need to be approved—often by such incompatible groups as his veterans' organization, his business associates, and his church-going neighbors. He inherits a tradition of an unlimited frontier on a continent that has suddenly become fenced in. His native land that has never been beaten in warfare now lives under the shadow of

atomic war. His fear of death must be borne alone, since our society disguises it, even to the avoidance of the word. Man's anxiety in the face of his own inventions and his very weapons of defense constitutes a responsibility, and an opportunity, for those who deal meaningfully with ultimate Truth. The Church is under obligation to help man to understand this situation, to help him bring these threats under control, and yet to nurture him so that he is not cowed, even in the face of the failure to control them.

Genuine community: Men are desperate for meaningful relationships with each other. Especially in cities, where people are thrown together like marbles in a bag, they long to be bound together in interdependence and common effort. The indifference of many suburbanites to the people of the inner city on which they depend is shocking. Churches have a great part to play in helping the neighborhoods within the city develop a sense of community, and then to realize their unity with others in the metropolitan center and beyond.

In Education

According to the conservative estimates of the United States Office of Education, the current school enrollment exceeds the normal capacity of the nation's schools by 2,300,000 children. The average net increase in school enrollment is one and one-quarter million children. This means that the nation needs at least 159,000 new classrooms. Various programs for school construction have been before the Con-

gress. They recognize that national resources will be required to meet the situation and to eliminate gross inequalities in school facilities. None of the proposed programs, it should be noted, seriously detracts from the responsibility of the local community or its authority over its schools.

The shortage of teachers is serious and it is probable that federal assistance will be required if the less favored sections of the nation are to have adequate educational programs. While Christians are aware of the risks involved in the supervision of federal aid to education, they are even more concerned about the perils of ignorance and inadequate preparation for the duties of citizenship.

One difficulty which we shall continue to face is that of overcoming inequalities in educational opportunity, whether these inequalities be based on geographic, social, or economic factors. Federal assistance can do much to help equalize the opportunities of children in the economically disadvantaged states and regions. Public opinion and the action of the courts is beginning to eradicate racial segregation in education and the injustice which accompanies it. However, we may face a still more formidable obstacle in counteracting differences of class and income, in the public schools and in higher education. Class segregation may turn out to be an even more obstinate threat to democratic values than racial segregation.

Our concern goes beyond the availability of education. As Christians, concerned with the whole

person in the light of an all-embracing faith, we have an even deeper interest in the quality, content, purpose, and frame of reference of our educational system. How well we are educating, and for what, are matters for continued and earnest debate.

What are the respective claims of technical competence and cultural depth and breadth? How can the school deal more satisfactorily with religion? How can the church appropriately secure and use opportunities for more extensive and intensive Christian education? And how can disruptive pressures from sectarian and other groups be avoided?

In Economic Life

The last twenty-five years have seen important changes both in our world economy and in the churches' understanding of their role in relation to economic life. Labor organization and the right of collective bargaining have been accepted and integrated into the legal and social structure, in spite of "pockets of resistance." The responsibility of government to act as a stabilizing factor and to prevent extremes of hardship for any group in the nation has been generally recognized. The Christian significance of daily work and the duty of the church to express its best judgment on significant economic issues are beginning to be recognized.

The problem of making and keeping powerful economic blocs—farm, labor, and manufacturing—truly responsible has led to numerous efforts to curb them. In some cases, as in the

misnamed "right-to-work" laws, the effort threatens to create more evils than it cures. Yet the need to bring internal discipline and social control into balance still persists. Economic forces and ethical and social obligations devolve upon *all* groups, economic as well as others.

Special problems face us as a result of the phenomenon of automation. To attempt to stop technological advance is futile, but to shrug off the difficulties of adjustment or to fail to assess the risks and distribute them equitably is morally indefensible. Special programs to retrain the displaced workers will be required. Not only individuals but whole communities will be affected. Not only the livelihood but the deepest welfare of people is at stake. Cries of fear and hurt cannot be drowned in unctious anthems to progress.

Nor can we assume that poverty has been wiped from the face of the land. Many unskilled workers, some recent immigrants, and agricultural migrants have sub-standard incomes which call for our attention. The benefits of our abundance must be distributed more equitably among all of the children of the God of Justice. And when we compare our national economic situation with that of other peoples, it is very apparent that we have only begun to face the economic challenge of our time.

In Racial and Cultural Relations

Probably no issue is more explosive and more pressing at home or abroad than relations among the races. As never before, the white

Christian's faith in God the Father and the white American's tribute to brotherhood are being tested as men of color ask, "Do you mean it?" There have been significant gains in the direction of justice. Perhaps most salutary of all is the recognition both by the courts and by a growing majority of people, that equal justice cannot prevail in the framework of exclusiveness and segregation.

Nevertheless, there remains much unfinished business. We must, for example, solidify the gains which have been made toward equalizing educational opportunity and desegregating public schools, colleges, and universities. Continued interpretation and *bona fide* compliance with the decisions of the Federal courts are required. Also there must be persistent pressure to assure equal opportunity in employment, in the conduct of business, in public accommodations, in voting and in access to public office.

Perhaps most crucial at the present time is the need for adequate housing in good surroundings without discrimination of a racial or cultural character. Indeed, as long as residential segregation continues, it will be difficult to assure normal inclusiveness in schools, churches, and other community institutions. And unless these barriers are broken down quickly, many Americans of Negro, Puerto Rican, Indian and Mexican ancestry will continue to grow up in the psychologically and spiritually crippling circumstances of congestion, deprivation, and disease. Christian home owners, bankers, and real estate men might well

follow the suggestion of a sister denomination and promote Covenants of Open Occupancy, indicating readiness to sell, rent, or lend to applicants regardless of their ethnic background upon the basis of fair and objective community conservation standards.

As we work to correct racial injustices in the community, we must be aware that judgment begins in the House of the Lord. We are grateful for the growing number of congregations in our united fellowship which have become in fact "houses of prayer for all peoples." Yet many churches resist or ignore the imperative of Christian brotherhood. Most, though not all, of our church-related colleges welcome students of every ethnic origin. Much would be gained if all our homes and hospitals bore visible witness that Christ has broken down the walls of division! At the very least, it is hoped, the conferences, conventions, synods and associations will speedily take steps to eliminate the walls that were erected in another day by language, color, and tradition.

In Mass Communications

The original spokesmen of the social gospel movement were well aware of the power of the press. They recognized the value of socially responsible and crusading journalists and they warned against the menace of corrupt and "kept" editors and publishers. However, the advent of radio and television, the burgeoning of advertising and public relations into something compounded of missionary devotion and

nihilistic cynicism, the mortality of newspapers and magazines and the attendant constriction of information through fewer and larger channels, have brought new dimensions to the problem of mass communication. Social action agencies have been remiss in failing to give thoughtful attention to this massive factor in modern society.

On the negative side, we recognize the danger of the loss of competition in news media. We see the threats of mass conformity as millions live in one-paper communities, view the same insane programs of entertainment, hear the same preposterous commercials, and too often follow the least reliable reporters and commentators. Many broadcasters avoid subjects which might offend someone. We accept the passive "nationwide audience" as a poor exchange for the challenge of participation in the town meeting, the public forum, or the civic group. Not simply the right but the very possibility of dissent is lost to us—as public opinion is manipulated, tastes are cheapened, and wants are exploited. An entertained public easily becomes docile, suggestible, and unwilling to exercise responsibility for the common welfare.

On the positive side, however, mass communications constitute a challenge and an opportunity. If there are venal newspapers, there are also papers with a conscience. If there are bad programs, there are also good ones. Who will help people to choose between them? How can we develop a well informed, socially concerned, religiously literate citizenry through bet-

ter use of the media which offer us such significant possibilities? Who will understand, interpret, tame and harness this power—and how?

Surely it will not be done by those who try to turn back the calendar and act as if we were living in an earlier day. Neither will it be done by those who act as if the problem would take care of itself. Only a faith that understands that all of life belongs to God, and a love that seeks to serve Him with all the resources of heart, soul, mind, and strength, will avail in such an hour.

In World Affairs

Another high priority on the agenda for American Christians is to relate their Christian ethic to the issues of foreign policy. Churchmen, like their fellow-Americans who are innocent of any churchly pretension, are inclined to assume that the realities of power politics will yield readily to pious exhortation, or to go to the other extreme and absolutize the national interest without reference to any transcendent judgment. The one point of view is illustrated by a respected clergyman at a national conference, who called for the abandonment of military alliances and "power politics" and reliance on unimplemented decency. The other is illustrated by the layman who opposed a church pronouncement against universal military training on the ground that the military authorities knew more about the subject than a group of church leaders.

Our uniting churches share with each other and with the ecumenical movement the conviction that we

have responsibility, as Christians, for understanding and helping to influence the course of foreign policy. To understand the church's role, we must keep in mind basic theological considerations: God's will to peace, his universal love, the worldwide nature and mission of his church, the reconciling work of Christ, and the moral accountability of every state and government as instruments of God's providence. At the same time, we have the obligation to understand political processes and problems, so that we may relate our theological and ethical convictions to them in a meaningful way.

This means that we must think clearly about principle and compromise, about power and conciliation, about the respective roles of altruism and national interest in making our basic decisions as a nation. Our ultimate Christian objective must always remain in tension with our best immediate goal. Thus we shall work vigorously to support, strengthen, and cooperate with the United Nations; to help provide for the security of nations large and small; to aid underdeveloped countries; to further the control of nuclear weapons and other armaments; to bring about a concerted attack on the problems of illiteracy, illness, and hunger, and population pressures.

In Civil Liberties

A special aspect of our witness to the Lordship of Christ is the protection of the freedoms of the individual. The most profound reason for respecting the freedom of a person is that he may fulfill the service to which God calls him; for unless

he is free from oppression, insecurity of person, arbitrary arrest, and has access to information, he is thwarted in his ability to follow where God may lead him. God gave man the dignity of sonship. Whatever degrades or enslaves man, therefore, is evil; and Christians must wage war against it.

Given this perspective, the effort to relate Christian faith to freedom of speech and assembly, of thought and action is not an "elective." Whether it be restriction of Protestant education in Spain or Colombia, arrogant character assassination by an undisciplined Congressional investigating committee, or unjust dismissal of a mid-western school teacher, Christians are concerned.

In Political Life

There is a political dimension to most of the fields in which we shall be working during these coming years. Political action will be necessary and Christians must relate themselves responsibly to the whole complex of government.

Our first responsibility is for the common duties of citizenship. This means not simply voting, "no matter how," but discriminating, informed appraisal of candidates and their record; participation in the processes of party politics; and action by individuals and groups to support or oppose policies, through communication with legislators and administrators. Criticism from afar, contempt for things "political" and neglect of citizenship responsibilities encourage corruption not only

in government but in public life generally.

Many Christians will face the responsibility of political life through personal involvement as politicians, candidates, office holders, or civil servants. It is at this point that fresh efforts and experiments are called for by the churches. Granted we are not doing as much as we ought to develop an informed and active citizenry, a beginning at least has been made—in our seminars, congressional directories, voting records, and action bulletins. The church has neglected, if not self-righteously avoided, the professional politician—save for a few prominent representatives of the profession whom church groups occasionally put on exhibition. The Christian significance of politics as a vocation, Christian fellowship among its practitioners, and two-way communication with theologians, denominational officials, political scientists and others—these constitute a fresh challenge in the days ahead.

Christians who take seriously their biblical heritage with its social message and its political implications, who assert that God is Lord over all of life, who recognize that the state as well as the church is an object of God's solicitude and purpose, must take seriously the religious significance of politics. They must strive to write just laws, and have them wisely administered. In a day when more and more of our life is affected by government, Christians must help make it responsible to the will of the people and, above all, to the sovereignty of the God of righteousness.

IN CONCLUSION

These are some of the many issues which are confronting us now and will continue to challenge us. Their number and importance point to the large unmet mission in American society which is the reason for forming the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ.

The character of the task indicates, too, that the national boards and agencies, the conferences and synods, associations and local churches of our uniting fellowship

will need to take new measure of their task. The heartening awareness of the social task in the men's, women's, student, and youth organizations of our communions encourages us to have genuine hope that the church will resolutely undertake its great mission. Our times impel Christians individually and corporately to a holy obedience that will match the momentous issues of life and death. If in the providence of God we have come to the Kingdom for such a time as this, God grant that we may be faithful and equal to our trust.

EFFECTIVE SOCIAL ACTION

It must be admitted that the thinking, worship, and programs of vast numbers of churches and synagogues are as yet untouched by a conscious realization of the social implications of religion. It may be pointed out also that in those countries where religion has failed to speak out for democracy and social justice, communism and atheism have gained a ready foothold. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." . . .

The most effective social action is that which is directed to some specific problem *at a time when the issue is drawn*. Such courageously timed action is more effective than volumes of resolutions which may be referred to the churches for study.

—From *What Do We Know About Labor?*
By JAMES MYERS and HARRY W. LAIDLER

Three Christian Social Action Institutes

Persons who wish to explore the why and how of Christian social action are invited to participate in one of the three institutes sponsored by the Commission on Christian Social Action (Evangelical and Reformed) and the Council for Social Action (Congregational Christian). The program is designed to help ministers and members of social action committees prepare for more effective leadership in this significant aspect of the life of the church. Each institute will give attention to four areas of work: The Church and Social Welfare; The Christian and His Daily Work; Racial Integration in the Churches and in Housing; and International Relations.

WEST COAST CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE, July 9-13, White Memorial Retreat Center, Mill Valley, California.

Dr. John C. Bennet, Dean of Union Theological Seminary, will give a series of three addresses on "The Christian Basis for Social Action." Other leaders will be Rev. Chester L. Marcus; Rev. Herman F. Reissig; Rev. Byron Eshelman; Mr. Theodore Van Dyke; and Mrs. F. P. Brasseur. Miss Fern Babcock will be dean of the Institute.

MIDWEST CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE, July 15-19, Lakeland College Plymouth, Wisconsin.

Dr. Hugo Thompson, Professor of Religion at Macalester College, will give a series of three addresses on "The Christian Basis for Social

Action." Other leaders will be Rev. Galen R. Weaver; Rev. Herman F. Reissig; Rev. Jess H. Norenberg; and Rev. Huber F. Klemme. Miss Fern Babcock will be the dean.

EASTERN CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE, July 23-27, Massachusetts Congregational Conference Center, Framingham, Massachusetts.

Dr. William L. Bradley, Professor of the Philosophy of Religion of Hartford Theological Seminary, will give a series of three addresses on "The Christian Basis for Social Action." Other leaders will be Miss Fern Babcock; Rev. F. Nelsen Schlegel; Rev. Herman F. Reissig; and Rev. Galen R. Weaver. Dr. Myron W. Fowell will be dean of the Institute.

Christian Social Action in The United Church of Christ

The work of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ is directed by twenty-four members: twelve members of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church; and twelve of the eighteen members of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches. While most of their work will be done jointly, both the Commission and the Council will continue to maintain their identity until the Constitution of the United Church of Christ is adopted.

COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION of the Evangelical and Reformed Church



HENRY C. KOCH is chairman of the Commission. Dr. Koch is pastor of the Concordia Church in Washington, D.C.; and is president of the Washington Federation of Churches. He was formerly Executive Secretary of the World Service Commission of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

THE REV. THEODORE A. BRAUN. Pastor, Zion Church, Henderson, Kentucky.

MR. LEONARD C. BRECHER. Furniture Manufacturer, Louisville, Kentucky.

THE REV. ROY EILERS. Pastor, Immanuel-Memorial and Peace Parish, Alden, Iowa.

THE REV. CLARENCE E. JOSEPHSON, D.D., Assistant to the President, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois.

THE REV. HENRY C. KOCH, D.D., Pastor, Concordia Church, Washington, D.C.

MR. HAROLD C. KROPP, Attorney, Orrville, Ohio.

MR. MILTON W. MEYERS, Personnel Manager, Chicago, Illinois.

MR. C. B. NEWELL, Labor Representative, Freemansburg, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. WALTER S. PRESS, Pastor, Bethlehem Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MR. ROBERT D. SMINK, School Principal, Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

MRS. WILLIAM D. POWELL. Walkerville, Maryland.

THE REV. ALFRED F. SCHROEDER, Pastor, Christ Church, Belleville, Illinois.

COUNCIL ON SOCIAL ACTION of the Congregational Christian Churches

DR. PERCY L. JULIAN, Chairman, is president of the Julian Laboratories, Inc.; and a part-time research professor at Fisk University. He was the "Chicagoan of the Year" for 1950; and received the Centennial Distinguished Citizens Award of Northwestern University in 1951. He is a trustee of Roosevelt and Fisk Universities, and a member of the Governor's Commission on Human Relations, Illinois.



Note: Members whose names are starred (*) have been nominated as members of the CCSA.

*MR. HERBERT E. BALDWIN, Fruit Grower, Westport, Connecticut

*MRS. JOHN C. BENNETT, member, Executive Board, New York City Chapter of Christian Action.

*MRS. CHARLES E. BINGHAM, President, United Church Women of New Jersey, Newton.

*MRS. F. P. BRASSEUR, Chairman, Christian Social Action Committee, National Fellowship of Congregational Christian Women, Cleveland, Ohio.

MRS. ALLAN K. CHALMERS, Co-chairman, Inter-Faith Study Group, Boston, Massachusetts.

MR. TILFORD E. DUDLEY, Labor Education, Washington, D.C.

*THE REV. JOSEPH H. EVANS, Pastor, Church of the Good Shepherd, Chicago, Illinois.

*THE REV. CLYDE C. FLANNERY, Pastor, Brookmeade Congregational Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

*THE REV. MYRON W. FOWELL, Associate Superintendent, Massachusetts Congregational Conference, Boston.

*THE REV. RALPH D. HYSLOP, Professor, Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York.

*DR. PERCY L. JULIAN, Research Chemist, Chicago, Illinois.

THE REV. JAMES H. LIGHTBOURNE, Jr., Superintendent, Southeast Convention, Atlanta, Georgia.

*THE REV. EVERETT W. MACNAIR, Pastor, Plymouth Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MR. ROBERT H. MARSHALL, Banker, Holyoke, Massachusetts.

MR. J. STUART RUSSELL, Farm Editor, *Des Moines Register and Tribune*, Des Moines, Iowa.

*MRS. PAUL E. TANNER, Chairman, Association Social Action Committee, Rochester, New York.

*THE REV. HUGO W. THOMPSON, Professor, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota.

DR. PARK J. WHITE, Pediatrician; Assistant Professor, Clinical Pediatrics, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.



Left to right: Huber F. Klemme, Fern Babcock, Chester L. Marcus,
Herman F. Reissig, Ray Gibbons, F. Nelsen Schlegel, Galen R. Weaver

STAFF COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

THE REV. HUBER F. KLEMME, D.D., is Executive Secretary. His primary responsibilities include administration, liaison relationships with other organizations, and writing. He has been the editor of *CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY* and will carry this responsibility for the united work. He will also serve as a resource leader in the fields of Economic Life, Civil and Religious Liberty, and Conscientious Objection to War. He holds degrees from Johns Hopkins University (A.B.); Union Theological Seminary (B.D.); and Heidelberg College (D.D.). He has held pastorates in Newark, New Jersey; Alexandria, Kentucky; Fairborn, Ohio; and Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan.

THE REV. F. NELSEN SCHLEGEGL is Associate Secretary for Field Service. His primary responsibilities are to assist synodical and local committees for Christian Social Action in studying their needs and opportunities, and in planning how to meet them. He will serve as the resource leader for the joint Council in the fields of Social Welfare, Mental Health, and Family Life. He is a graduate of Ursinus College and Hartford Theological Seminary. He has held pastorates in Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. He has been a teacher in mission colleges in Cairo and Baghdad.

THE REV. CHESTER L. MARCUS is Associate Secretary for Race Relations of the CCSA and the Board of National Missions (E and R). His

primary responsibilities are for consultation and education on race relations, granting scholarships for Negro and Indian students, and working with churches in changing communities. He and Mr. Weaver will share responsibility for the field of Racial and Cultural Relations for the joint Council. He holds a B.S. degree from Alcorn A. & M. College, Alcorn, Mississippi. His B.D. degree is from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He was formerly pastor of the Washington Street Presbyterian Church in Reading, Pennsylvania. In 1954, the Fellowship House of Reading gave him its medal for the outstanding contribution toward interracial understanding.

STAFF

COUNCIL ON SOCIAL ACTION

of the Congregational Christian Churches

THE REV. RAY GIBBONS, D.D., is the Director. His primary responsibilities include administration, interpretation, field services, and maintaining liaison relationships with other organizations. He will carry responsibility for the Joint Council in the areas of Education and of Political Life. Dr. and Mrs. Gibbons will lead the European Seminar in the summer of 1957. Dr. Gibbons holds degrees from Oberlin College (A.B.), Teachers College of Columbia University (M.A.), Union Theological Seminary (B.D.), and Defiance College (D.D.). He has held pastorates in Westbrook, Maine; and Northampton, Massachusetts.

MISS FERN BABCOCK is Program Secretary. Her primary responsibilities are for publications and leadership training. She will serve as acting editor of *SOCIAL ACTION* and will carry responsibility in the fields of Mass Communication, the Aging, and Use of Leisure for the United Council. Miss Babcock is a graduate of Kansas State Teachers College and of Teachers College of Columbia University. Before joining the CSA staff in 1955, she was Program Secretary of the National Student YWCA; and co-editor of *The Intercollegian*.

THE REV. GALEN R. WEAVER is Secretary for Racial and Cultural Relations of the CSA and the Board of Home Missions (CC). His primary responsibilities are for education and consultation on race relations; and for liaison relationships with organizations working on race relations. He is a graduate of Ohio University (A.B.) and Union Theological Seminary (B.D.). He was founder and pastor for 23 years of the Church of the Crossroads in Honolulu. He came to his present position in 1946.

THE REV. HERMAN F. REISSIG is International Relations Secretary. His primary responsibilities include education, writing, and consultation on international relations and on the general work of social action. He will carry responsibility for international relations for the joint Council. He is a graduate of Wagner College and Mt. Airy Lutheran Theological Seminary. He has held pastorates in Brooklyn, New York, and Quincy, Illinois.

WORKSHOP

**Edited by
Herman F. Reissig**

Farewell and Hail!

The new publication schedule, as you will have read elsewhere in this issue, provides that (1) CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY will, beginning in September, take over the function of WORKSHOP, this publication to be sent to everyone on the WORKSHOP list, and (2) SOCIAL ACTION, while putting a little more emphasis on short and timely material, will no longer include the WORKSHOP section. The editor of WORKSHOP who now, as editor, says a grateful and affectionate farewell, will contribute to both CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, which will be edited by Huber Klemme, and SOCIAL ACTION, of which Fern Babcock will be acting editor. The writing of these columns has been, mostly, fun. And for this fact he owes thanks, first, to Ernest Johnson, whose encouragement he will always remember; second, to Betty Henley, who was always so nice about the "deadline" and so efficient in cutting and layout; and, third, to scores of people who have said nice things and sent in material. So, it's Farewell to WORKSHOP and Hail to the new CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY and the new SOCIAL ACTION.

In This Last Workshop

In accordance with the directions of those who rule (very democratically!) in these matters, we are re-

printing in this final issue what we consider some of the best short items published recently in WORKSHOP and a longer story from CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY—all dealing with action on the local level. As if to say: "Here, even if we have published some of it before, is a partial record of good work actually being done in the churches. Let the believers believe more and the skeptical be converted!"

ACTION IN THE CHURCHES

Better than a Carpet Factory

I have nothing against carpet factories but . . . During a ministers' meeting some years ago one of the pastors arose and said: "I am sorry that I have to leave early; I promised the ladies of my church that I would go with them to the carpet factory." We knew what that meant. The factory had promised to give one dollar, or something like that, for each woman from the church who visited the factory on that day. Advertising for the carpet manufacturer and a little extra income for the church! Happily, there is less and less of that sort of thing in church finance.

From Mrs. A. E. Nuquist of Burlington we learn that the Women's Fellowships in the Rutland, Addison, Champlain, Washington, and Lamoille districts of Vermont had a better idea. Last March 13, fifty-

two women from fourteen Women's Fellowships visited the Brandon State School for delinquent boys and girls. The women saw for themselves what is being done to re-train young people who have fallen into trouble. On April 24, twenty women from six Vermont churches spent a day at the Waterbury State Hospital. WORKSHOP does not know what the women did with the information they received on these two visits. That might make another story. We think it's a mighty good idea for church people to get acquainted with their state institutions. Could you organize similar visits to institutions in your state?

—From WORKSHOP

No Headline Here

My impulse was to head this paragraph, "By golly!" It didn't seem likely to get by the blue pencil of SOCIAL ACTION's editor; so the headline is transferred to the first sentence, with the hope that the editor won't notice it. Anyhow, when I read the first report of the new social action committee in Old First Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, I said, "By golly!" Last fall this committee laid out a program of activities, listing from one to seven items for every month right through to next May. For example:

"December—(1) Plans for gifts to be sent to Framingham Prison for Women and to mental hospitals; (2) Trip to United Nations.

"January—(1) Study new legislation: especial interest in prison legislation and housing.

It would be interesting to publish the whole program—as an example

of thoughtful planning. "This committee," says the report, "consists of one member from each church organization and the ministers. They are to alert and report back to their separate organizations the work of this committee and the social issues discussed. We are fortunate to have in the committee a deacon, a school teacher, a social worker, a man from the Better Business Bureau, and a brilliant high school student." The chairman is Ina B. Allen. Good luck to you in Old First Church!

—From WORKSHOP

Vermont Goes to New York

Robert J. Bills, chairman of the Social Action Committee of the Vermont Congregational Conference, deserves something like a 21-gun salute for his work on the seventh annual UN Study Tour. To take fifty young people from many parts of Vermont to the United Nations requires a fair amount of work and the way Vermont did it is mighty impressive. A special railroad car brought them to New York on Sunday evening, October 16, where they stayed at the Hotel New Yorker. Monday and Tuesday were spent at the UN, with time out for a sightseeing tour in upper New York and Harlem, a visit to Radio City Music Hall, and a worship service in one of the chapels of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Highlight of the two days was a meeting with U.S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. Four chaperones accompanied the group. In the railroad car en route to New York the young people joined in a service of worship. On the train trip back to Vermont there was a discussion on

"What PYF groups can do to acquaint local churches with the UN."

Every detail of the trip was carefully scheduled in advance. Young people were even warned that there would be three roll calls at sessions in New York and that an absence from one of them would be reported to parents and pastor. Vermont schools permitted time-out for the trip. Mr. and Mrs. Bills went to New York in advance of the sixteenth to make final arrangements. If you are thinking of arranging a tour like this for the young people of your state, write to Mr. Bills, First Congregational Church, St. Albans, Vermont, for copies of the mimeographed pages sent to each member of his group. Great stuff!

—From WORKSHOP

Inclusive Fellowship

Perhaps there is coincidental significance in the fact that it was on "Reformation" Sunday, two years ago, that Pilgrim Church, Buffalo, took the initial step to reflect within its membership the changing racial complexion of its community by welcoming its first Negro member. Since then, his new-born son has been baptized, and his family has become integrated into the life of the Church, which, though predominantly white, also includes in its membership a Seneca Indian and a Japanese-American. On any given Sunday, the presence of these racial and cultural heritages makes it evident that the Christian gospel is universal, and that inter-racial brotherhood and Christian fellowship are synonymous.

In brief, the story is this: No previous attempt had been made by the

congregation to solicit new-comers to the community of different racial origin. It came as a totally new experience when, one Sunday morning, the congregation discovered a Negro to be a part of its worshiping fellowship. On succeeding Sundays the pastor, in private conversation, assured such new-comers that the door of the church was open to all who would worship in the name of Christ. In order to prevent undue curiosity and apprehension, special care was taken to assimilate new-comers into the active program of the church by inviting them to participate in such groups as the choir, the brotherhood and the college discussion group, prior to their request for membership. In this way they first came to be accepted as persons, and their friendship had already been established in natural group relationships.

During this past year, Mr. Wallace Cannon, the Negro member in question, was well received in the homes of our parish as he served with a white member on an Every Member Canvass Visitation Team. He also served on a Brotherhood Committee. His family also participates in social functions. Mr. John Waterman, an Indian American, has on several occasions spoken to groups on Indian lore and customs. The Reverend Joseph S. Sakumura, Japanese-American college work director of the Buffalo Council of Churches, conducted an adult class on "The World's Religions," and shared with the pastor in a communion service.

A year ago, the writer was approached by a District Scout Execu-

tive and informed of the felt need to create better racial understanding on the District level, since the Scouting Program embraced an area undergoing racial change. In response, Pilgrim Church appointed Mr. Cannon as its Institutional Representative, who then served on the District level. Mr. Cannon has since been made chairman of the Advancement Committee, which is one of the most influential committees. His recommendation for the appointment to this committee came from a member of a neighborhood church which has been resisting attempts made by its pastor to admit Negro members. The results of Mr. Cannon's contribution to Scouting are noted in a letter recently received from the District Scout Executive: "We were more than appreciative of your appointment of Mr. Wallace Cannon as Institutional Representative. He certainly is an outstanding man and has contributed a great deal to the running of the District operation." We have recently been informed that other Negroes are now serving on the District level, and that a healthy attitude now exists.

Most thrilling, in the past two years, has been the fact that our new members classes need never be told that, as Christians, we seek to be an inclusive fellowship: the fact is self-evident the moment a visitor worships with us. Nor have we noticed a decrease of those desiring membership. New-comers accept our present fellowship as normal, because they are soon to discover that a natural relationship evolves out of a fellowship of kindred minds.

Sometimes one hears the snide remark, "God gave us our relatives; thank God we can choose our friends." But sometimes, possibly at first to our embarrassment, or chagrin, our friends choose us. May we thank God . . . that this can be so.

—ROLAND F. ROEHN
in CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

For Example

Here's a good story from the First Congregational Church in Flushing, New York. The committee "spent the early part of this year on the problem of child guidance, or rather the lack of it, in New York City schools. A comprehensive survey of the schools in the Flushing area was made by the committee and reports were given at the budget hearings of both the Board of Education and the Board of Estimate. . . . We feel gratified," says the report, "to find that money for four new units (each consisting of a psychiatrist and assistants) has been allocated for the coming year to the work of guidance in the school system. We all know that the best way to combat juvenile delinquency is to help our city children before they ever become delinquent."

There you have it! Careful investigation, persistent action—and real success! Mrs. Stanley Ferguson, chairman of the committee, personally appeared at Board of Estimate hearings. The city officer in charge of the hearings said publicly that the Board was especially pleased to find a religious group represented. He apparently thought it a rare occurrence. The pastor of the church is Alfred H. Rapp.—From WORKSHOP.

A Letter to

READERS of SOCIAL ACTION

June, 1957

Dear Reader:

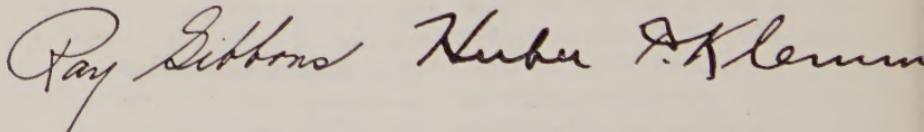
Beginning in September, SOCIAL ACTION will bring you additional features of great interest. There will be suggestions on how to develop programs based upon the theme of the issue, related worship materials, and suggestions for resource reading. When books, films, or TV programs throw light on current social issues, we will review them. Our goal is to make the magazine so interesting and useful that you who are laymen, laywomen, and pastors will want to read it immediately and then urge your friends to read it. It will be published nine times a year.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, now published by the CCSA of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, will become the news and program service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ. It will replace WORKSHOP. CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY will be sent to all Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed pastors and chairmen and members of national, state, synodical, and local social action committees, by virtue of their positions. It will be sent to other subscribers to SOCIAL ACTION upon request.

Miss Fern Babcock, formerly co-editor of *The Intercollegian*, and now program secretary of the CSA, will serve as acting editor of SOCIAL ACTION. Huber F. Klemme will serve as editor of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. Herman F. Reissig and other members of the staff will contribute to both the magazine and the program service.

Please use the enclosed card to enter or extend your subscription to SOCIAL ACTION and to request CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. Please mail it today to assure the receipt of both publications beginning in September.

Cordially yours,



Ray Gibbons, Director
Council for Social Action
(Congregational Christian)

Huber F. Klemme, Executive Secretary
Commission on Christian Social Action
(Evangelical and Reformed)